

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



**REMARKS BY
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA
EDWARD M. KENNEDY CENTER FOR
PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE ARTS
GRAND OPENING
EMK CENTER**

**MIDAS CENTER, DHANMONDI
SEPTEMBER 30, 2012**

Akku Chowdhury, Liberation War Museum Trustee

Korvi Rakshand, Founder, JAAGO and Volunteer for Bangladesh

Ejaj Ahmad, Founder, Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center

MK Aaref, EMK Center Director

Sadia Rahman, EMK Center Creative Director

Edward M. Kennedy ...

Senator, Humanitarian, Lover of Bangladesh, Planter of Trees ...

The Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service and the Arts is a living memorial to Senator Kennedy. Could there be a better way to commemorate the life of this great human being? I extend my deepest thanks to the Senator's family for enabling us to honor the Senator by naming this wondrous center after him.

Edward M. Kennedy ...

Senator, Humanitarian, Lover of Bangladesh, Planter of Trees ...

Indeed, planter of trees ... we all know of the sapling he planted at nearby Dhaka University on February 14, 1972 and how that sapling has grown into a massive banyan tree that now represents the strong partnership between America and Bangladesh.

As I look across this glorious space, I see a plant nursery ... a nursery filled with saplings, not saplings like the fragile one that Senator Kennedy planted over forty years ago ... but rather strong, vigorous, tough saplings ... young people who already are emerging as the nation's new leaders, as they forge their own organizations to build the new Bangladesh, to make Bangladesh bit by bit an ever better place ... young people who will be the great banyan trees of Bangladesh's future.

As I look across this glorious space, I see a construction yard filled with strong, vigorous, tough builders ... young people who are developing the skills and technology to forge the Middle-Income Bangladesh, the Golden Bangladesh. These builders are creating a Bangladesh that will provide a good quality of life to all its citizens, a Bangladesh where all will have access to an adequate livelihood that provides safe, secure housing, ample and nutritious food, access to good healthcare and quality education, a Bangladesh where stunting of children has been eliminated.

As I look across this glorious space, I see the rich paddy fields of Bangladesh filled with strong, vigorous, tough planters ... young people who are sowing seeds of hope, hope that tomorrow will be even better than today, hope of fully realizing the Bangladesh that is peaceful, secure, prosperous, healthy and democratic.

Can you imagine that all of this ... a plant nursery, a construction yard, rice fields ... that all of can take place right here at the EMK Center? Actually, you don't have to imagine ... just look around ... look at the wonderful young people here ... they indeed are already hard at work creating the Golden Bangladesh.

I am so pleased, I am so proud that America and Bangladesh are partners in building the new Bangladesh. And I am so pleased, I am so proud that we have partnered with the Liberation War Museum to create this glorious space in Senator Kennedy's memory to provide a base, a foundation, a home for Bangladesh's next generation of leaders.

As we seen in the several months since the Center's soft launch in July, some of nation's best young leaders are already taking full advantage of this facility. Hundreds of young social entrepreneurs have come to this beautiful new space to lead or participate in leadership training, to lead or participate in human rights workshops, to lead or participate in civic education programs.

During these couple of months, the EMK Center has also partnered with TED Talks, Microsoft social entrepreneurs, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

And this was only the beginning!

With this Grand Opening today, the EMK Center is now fully ready to support Bangladesh's strong, vigorous, tough young leaders of today ... and of tomorrow.

This emerging generation of leaders offers the nation great hope for realizing the long cherished dream of the Sonar Bangladesh.

I am pleased, I am proud that through the Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service and the Arts, America can help these new leaders hone the skills, build the organizations that they will need as they lead wonderful Bangladesh to ever greater heights.

Thank you.

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